



October 2016

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## FRACKING COMPANY FOR VILLAGE MEETING

Fracking company Ineos are circling around Letwell and Gildingwells with seismic surveys pencilled in to take place possibly as soon as December.

News of the development came to light after two land agents acting for the company called out of the blue at listed properties adjoining farmland on Ramper Road at Letwell armed with maps specifying test sites at various locations around the village.

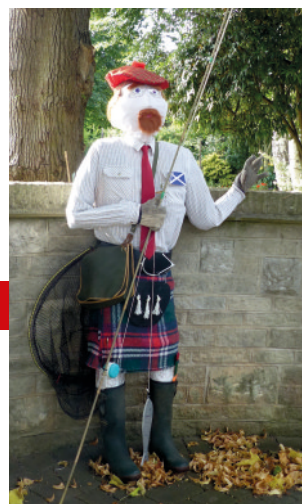
Residents were offered £200 if they agreed to have vibration monitors placed in their gardens for the duration of the tests.

Inevitably, the householders refused the offer.

One of the residents told FLAG: "I was quite taken aback by the whole business. I was in a state of shock afterwards. These two men simply turned up unannounced, and produced detailed maps with red dots marking the places where they wanted to work. These dots were all around Letwell and stretched all the way to Gildingwells.

"They me told they'd be doing seismic surveys in the field next to our house sometime in December, and they said they were surprised we didn't know all about it. They said there'd be some noise when they did the tests - it'd something like a double decker bus going past the house."

Letwell Parish Council have since contacted Ineos, who have agreed to attend an open meeting at the Village Hall on Thursday November 10th. The council have also invited campaign group Frack Free South Yorkshire to attend. The meeting starts at 7.30 p.m.



*Scarecrow Festival Fun*

Rotherham council say seismic investigations can be carried out without the need for a planning application. If developers wish to go further and extract gas shale then a formal application would have to be submitted.

A senior planner told FLAG that companies are prevented by law from carrying out seismic surveys within 50 metres of any property.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR HALL PLANS

Restoration of Firbeck Hall and re-development of the site takes a major step forward in the next few weeks with architects holding a public consultation at Firbeck Village Hall on Tuesday November 1st. The plans would see 21 apartments created in the hall itself with three apartments in the stable block and nine new dwellings in the grounds. More details are published inside FLAG.

## NEWS FROM FIRBECK PARISH COUNCIL

Recently Firbeck Parish Council continued its links with Yorkshire Ambulance Service, and their **defibrillator programme** by holding an excellent 3 hour first aid course for 16 Firbeck residents run by Emma. The Parish Council, through Cllr. Andy Shiel, have been part of an action group petitioning YAS management to increase the response radius from 200 metres to 600 metres from the defibrillator location. That did not suit a village layout which is long and narrow like Firbeck. New software has been installed to the YAS system and from early October 2016 this will extend to 600 metres. When a defibrillator is required in an emergency, an ambulance call handler will be able to provide the location and access code of the device.

We are hoping to organize a **Christmas Tree Festival** in Firbeck this year in conjunction with the Parochial Church Council. We will have our usual Christmas tree opposite the church but are wanting to have smaller trees lining the church path decorated by groups and businesses. Lighting of the trees along with refreshments are planned to take place on November 27 to mark the first Sunday in Advent. Leaflets will be distributed to households with further details in due course.

Cllr. Chris Stanton reported to the last Parish Council meeting that there was still a difference of opinion between the planners and the owner of **Firbeck Hall** particularly in regard to the amount of work that would need to be undertaken to the hall before other work could be carried out. Despite this, a presentation of the proposed draft plans could be arranged by the owner for residents as early as November.

In line with responses in the questionnaire the Parish Council is to produce a **Welcome Booklet** for the village. It would be helpful to organize a small group of residents to help with this project. If you have skills in layout and graphics or are interested in this project, please contact Cllr. Wendy Hamilton on [wendy.fpc@outlook.com](mailto:wendy.fpc@outlook.com).

We have learnt from Letwell PC that a few residents, both there and in Gildingwells, have been approached at their houses by representatives of INEOS company who are looking to carry out seismic exploration for shale gas with a view to possible **fracking** in the future. The purpose of these visits is to offer households a sum of money in return for allowing the company access to their grounds during this initial process. Cllr. Wendy Hamilton attended a meeting run by INEOS where it was stated that IGAS would be the company who may look for shale gas in our area. An approach has been made to IGAS by Firbeck PC but there has not yet been any response.

Earlier this year a leaflet was sent out to all residents in Firbeck asking if anyone was prepared to act as a voluntary **Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)** to the Parish Council. No one came forward at this time, although Cllr. Chris Stanton kindly offered to cover the role of clerk on a temporary basis. An advert was placed for a paid clerk and RFO. We have received several applications and interviews are to go ahead this October.

The proposed resurfacing of **New Road** is still scheduled to go ahead around October this year and residents will be advised of specific dates in due course. Concerns about the tight right hand bend near the top of Haven Hill on Lamb Lane have been raised.

**Cllr Wendy Hamilton.**

## PAWS IN THE NEWS

Reverend Jacki wasn't the only one wearing a dog collar at St. Martin's Church recently as pets were welcomed to a special service of blessing on the weekend nearest October 4th - the feast day of St Francis of Assisi the patron saint of animals and the environment.

To meet the needs of congregation the service was informal and included an entertaining quiz which tested our knowledge of the animal kingdom and gave us 'paws' for thought.

Although most of the four legged congregation were dogs they were overseen by one feline representative who, just by a look, made it obvious who was in charge.

The service was a great success with no growling, lots of tail wagging and some joyous barking, so much so that it is now hoped that it will now to become an annual event.

To quote Brenda, a local Tibetan Terrier 'Woff. Woof. Woff'



*The 'congregation' gathers outside Firbeck Church*

## FIRBECK HALL - HAVE YOUR SAY

Architects Building Link Design are seeking local opinion about their proposals for the restoration and refurbishment of Firbeck Hall and the associated stable block.

The architects tell FLAG that the proposals will create 21 apartments in the hall, three apartments within the stable block and nine new dwellings within the grounds of the hall in place of the derelict outbuildings currently occupying the site.

They say that the construction of the new dwellings allows for sufficient funding vital to the restoration of the listed buildings.

The architects are extending an invitation to everyone to attend a public consultation event scheduled for November 1st at Firbeck Village Hall between the hours of 1.30 pm and 6 pm.

A spokesman told FLAG: "We look forward to seeing everyone there to answer any questions there may be, and receive any feedback on the proposals."

## MY MUM WAS KILLED HERE - PLEASE DRIVE CAREFULLY

Following a tragic and ultimately fatal road traffic accident on Sunday 31st January 2016 at approximately 13.30, my Mum, Mary Jane Webster, spent the next seven weeks in a coma, in Intensive Care recovering from a catalogue of injuries including a broken neck, pelvis and very significant brain trauma.

Seven weeks later, almost to the minute, my Mum passed away. The medics were unable to revive Mum following cardiac arrest.

Although Mum made significant progress during this period of time, the extent of the injuries was just too much.

The accident was not my Mums fault. Another driver lost control of his car and collided with my Mum's mini head on. Mums head made very significant impact with the A-frame of her car.

Mum was a resident of Letwell for many years and loved the village, the vibrant and engaging village community and the village life immensely. My parents moved to Ravenfield in 2014.

Mum dedicated her life to helping others and to serving God. The freewill that God gave us all so often ends tragically, as we see every day. But isn't this what makes us humans unique and God-like?

What do you do in such a situation? I know what I did – I cried continuously, questioned everything including self, lost the path, lost my motivation, seemingly lost everything. There is no guide in such situations and the grieving process is uncharted.

We decided to erect a sign at the site of the incident to raise awareness on this notoriously treacherous road (the A634 just before Roche Abbey). We believe the sign has achieved the desired results and we are very grateful for the local support we have received in this regard.

On the front cover of Mums 2016 diary are the words 'don't count the days, make the days count'. I'm sure we can all take a valuable lesson from these words and sentiment.

My Father, my brother and I are raising money for a charity that Mum supported prior to her death. The charity is called Harvest Gardens and assists African people to grow their own crops using advanced (yet basic) farming methods. The project is self-sustaining, life-sustaining and invaluable to these communities. What we particularly like about this cause is that all funds raised go straight to the front line – no hidden costs, overheads or expenses. Harvest Ministries in the West Midlands operate this cause. They are truly inspirational people. Please visit [www.harvestgardens.co.uk](http://www.harvestgardens.co.uk)

We will be holding two fund-raising events in 2017. The 1st will be a choir concert at The Well (Baptist Church) in Retford on Friday 31st March 2017. The concert will be The Tickhill and District Male Voice Choir and Possibly The Retford Ladies Choir.

The 2nd event will be a Spring Ball held at the Old Bell in Markham Moor on Friday 12th May 2017.

In the next edition of FLAG, we will notify where/how tickets for both events can be purchased and the specific details of both. It would be great to see you there if you can make it.

Chris Webster (Mary's son)

## SHORT OF A HOLE JOB

Streetpride, Rotherham council's highway department, have come in for criticism after failing to honour a commitment to completely re-surface the heavily damaged section of Lamb Lane between Salt Hill and the county boundary beyond Haven Hill.

The work had been included in RMBC's highway programme for a year, but the contractors never materialised as promised in the early part of the summer. The council insisted the project wasn't in jeopardy at first, but finally admitted they wouldn't be re-laying the road in August - saying it intended to "deep patch" the most severely potholed areas prior to a more comprehensive scheme next year. Let's hope they keep their promise this time!

Engineers, meanwhile, say they will re-surface the stretch of highway at the junction of Lamb Lane and Kidd Lane which was missed when the contractors were on site last year.

## ART SHOW SUCCESS

Letwell's talented art group enjoyed a successful weekend at their annual show with visitors and villagers alike buying up much of the work on offer. Ten artists took part in all, and the quality of the work was as high as ever, attracting praise all weekend long.

The event coincided with the group exhibiting a new painting in the village bus shelter. The work - which depicts a harvest scene decorated with red poppies, ears of corn and a vintage combine - was a joint effort with each member of the group completing a single square of the picture.

Ann, the resident tutor, is hopeful that more people will join the group - which meets every Wednesday morning between 9.30 and 12.30 pm.

Ann told FLAG: "We really do welcome absolute beginners, anyone in fact who's willing to have a go at painting. You don't need to be talented to come along, and join in.

"I've spent many years working with groups in draughty old halls, where you could barely move your fingers because of the cold....so it's a joy to be at Letwell, where the heating works just fine, and the atmosphere's wonderful. I'd encourage anyone, who's interested, just to pop by on a Wednesday morning."



*Exhibitors at the Art Show*

## NEW YEAR'S EVE

Just a few tickets remain unsold for the New Year's Eve party at Letwell Village Hall.

The Stereos, fronted by the village's very own Roger Brooks, will be providing the entertainment just as they did at last year's sell out event.

A gourmet buffet will be available all night long from 9 pm till late.

Tickets are £25 a head with a £10 deposit needed to secure bookings. Phone **01909 731626** for more information.

## EVERYONE'S A WINNER AT THE SCARECROW FESTIVAL

Over a sunny September weekend Firbeck was invaded by more than 40 scarecrows. Visitors came from far and wide to follow the trail. Hidden in hedges, leaning on walls, lying in hammocks scarecrows were lurking everywhere, even high in the trees.

In the village hall an exhibition of creative arts showed how talented our residents are, artists, needle workers, stick makers, potters and two authors.

A display of photographs of Old Firbeck and Firbeck Hall attracted much interest bringing back memories for many people.

Visitors were also treated to a demonstration of the traditional craft of spinning.

Children enjoyed decorating gingerbread men and entering the miniature garden competition. So imaginative from Lego to baby vegetables. All entrants were winners.

In the hall delicious cakes, biscuits and rolls were served, many visitors revisiting for more! Throughout the weekend musicians and dancers provided the entertainment.

The Firbeck scarecrow team of Sharon Collins, Lisa Shiel, Anita Stanton, Sarah Ansley and Pat Robinson would like to thank each and every one who helped and supported the Firbeck Scarecrow Festival.

Over £1000 was raised for the village hall and the Church.

Words by Pat Robinson



*Memories of the Scarecrow Festival*



*Harvest Scene*

## RABBIT DISEASE

Several readers have contacted FLAG to voice their concern about the plight of our resident rabbit population - which has been decimated in recent weeks by an unexplained outbreak of the deadly disease myxomatosis.

Older members of the community say they have never seen anything like it with bodies scattered over fields and footpaths. One Letwell resident said: "It seemed to happen so quickly. The rabbits were everywhere a few weeks ago, but now there don't seem to be any at all. The rabbits last for 14 days once they've got the disease, and they've been wandering around everywhere in a dreadful state."

Dog owners can be re-assured that their pets can't catch the disease.

Families with domestic pet rabbits are advised to consult a vet about a course of vaccination.

## HAVE YOU EVER SEEN MR DUMP IT?

FLAG wonders if Rotherham council have considered permanently siting a rubbish skip in the layby midway between Penny Hill and Leys Lane on Lamb Lane. The spot has become a fly-tippers paradise with all manner of debris and junk piling up on a continual basis. Hardly a day passes without some dozy dimwit in a van turning up with a fresh consignment of rubbish. And nobody ever seems to catch Mr. Dump-It-And-Run in action.

A huge steel drum materialised a fortnight ago. Looks easy enough to move on the face of it, but guess what ...it's actually packed full of heavy duty concrete. Sometimes we even feel sorry for RMBC!

\*FLAG has got a bottle of bubbly waiting for the first person who spots a dumper in the act, and manages to jot down the vehicle reg. number.



*What an eyesore!*

## QUILT SHOW

Final preparations were underway for a quilt show at Letwell as we went to press. The event, hosted by the Dovecote Quilters, takes place at the Village Hall from 11 am to 3 pm on Friday October 21st. Admission costs just £2.

Handcrafted items will go on sale, and coffee, cakes and soup will be available for visitors too. A fabric and notions sales table will be set up as well.

Proceeds from the show will help support the Operation Christmas Shoe Box Appeal fund.

## FASCINATING INSIGHT INTO DAYS GONE BY

Firbeck seems to have specialised in women landowners, managing large estates and even managing those of their neighbours in their absence. In the eighteenth century it was Henrietta and Amelia Staniforth who managed the Firbeck Hall estate between the years 1765 – 1791, and in the nineteenth century it was Frances Harriott Miles, who bought the Firbeck Hall estate in 1853 and managed it until her death in 1877.

Julia Colver and Valerie Oxley, of the Friends of Firbeck Hall, are putting together a new talk about the history of our area, in particular concentrating on the nineteenth century, when Mrs Frances Harriott Miles owned the Firbeck Hall estate and Major John St Leger owned the Park Hill estate.

The St Leger family were often away from home and from an account book covering the years 1866 – 1870 written by Mrs Miles, we can see that she was managing the affairs of the whole village. It has taken Valerie and Julia about a year to transcribe the accounts and to double check the entries, thus revealing a remarkable insight into the day to day running of the two estates whose lands stretched as far as Laughton, across to Maltby and towards Hodsock and beyond.

However, Mrs Miles was not alone, she had the trusty help of her Land Agent, a Mr John Horncastle, and later his son Henry. John Horncastle and his wife Eliza lived at The Yews, Firbeck, their son Henry was the fourth of five children to be baptised in Firbeck Church. Henry's father had been the Land Agent for Henry Gally Knight. Henry succeeded his father and features frequently in Mrs Miles' account book. Regular and quite large amounts of money are paid out in cash or by cheque to 'H' as well as claims for stamps, cash books, labels, copying books and even butterscotch at 1/-. Henry Horncastle dealt with rents, tithes, valuing timber, expenses of the estate workers, and some matters concerning Laughton School for Major St Leger.

Tithes were paid in monetary terms on newly enclosed land. On Candlemas Day 1868, Henry Horncastle collected a year's tithe of 3s 0d from Major John St Leger for Laughton School. Rents were paid by tenants on Lammas Day and Michaelmas Day. Tenants also paid land tax, the poor rate and cattle plague tax. On 23rd May 1867, G. Turner paid the Firbeck poor rate at 1/-. W. Doughty paid the Letwell poor rate at 2/-. he also paid land tax and tithes. W. Drinkill of Laughton paid the poor rate at 10d and T.G. Hirst paid the cattle plague rate in Maltby amounting to 6s 1d. The poor rate helped people who had fallen on difficult times by subsidising the workhouses, we have no records of anyone being sent to the workhouse and it would seem that Firbeck looked after its own families who faced difficult times.

Managing the woodlands and game was an important part of the estate's business. George Burchby, the woodman, who at one time lived at Ivy Lodge, was paid 16s for six days 'springing', and £1 1s 6d for eight Sundays and eight nights 'watching game'. The game keeper, James Newton was paid for the licence and keep of two dogs and for ferrets, and he claimed poaching expenses of £2.19s 0d.

We were puzzled by references to 'kidding' until we discovered that a kid could be a dozen poles or stakes. W. Harpham was paid £2 16s 8d for kidding and pea sticks. John Penny was paid 1s 10d for kidding, 500 kid. Richard Littlewood, a farmer of 52 acres living on Town Street (now New Road), was paid for 'stakes' and M. Spencer was paid for 'stakes' and 'poles'. G. Maskill was paid for 'cutting stakes' and G. Burchby and S. Wilkinson were paid for peeling. Other people were paid for peeling, felling, stubbing and Thwaites. Thwaites were clearings in woodland or clearings in scrubland which were then used for cultivation.

Estate workers were paid for ice getting, breaking stone, baring in quarry and for building a quarry wall. There was also a payment to the 'Highway Surveyor' and a highway rate was paid of 6d.

J. Dennett was paid £1.12s for two weeks rabbiting, and 1/- for one day rabbiting, a boy rabbiting was paid 1/6. Sixty rabbits were sold for £1/10/- and rabbit meat, less skins, was sold. S. Clarke sold two pigs to R. Littlewood in November 1867 for £2 4s 0d. At the end of August 1869 S. Clarke was paid £7 4s 8d for pigs, veal, skins and tallow. Tallow is the fatty tissue from animals that was used for making candles and soap. Rats were a great problem on the estate particularly as they had a fondness for tallow. Sometimes house fires were caused by rats knocking over lighted tallow candles when they attempted to run away with them at night. The account book reflects an attempt to eradicate the rat problem. In 1867 Henry Turner was paid £1 11s 11d for destroying church rats over a two year period at 1d each.

A turkey house was built and turkeys were sold at various rates from 2/- to 10/-. Mrs Bowring claimed 1s 3d expenses for taking turkeys to Doncaster to sell. Two bottles of 'poultry restoration' were bought for 5s, and 2s was paid for a two year old duck. Mrs Bowring was also paid 3s for 'dripping' and a sitting hen. Her numerous visits to Doncaster market resulted in her claim of 3s for the 'soling of boots'.

In 1869 green top turnip seed was bought for 6s, and other farm seeds were bought from Fisher, Holmes and Co. In 1867 the haymakers were paid 4/- and in 1868 they were paid 10/-. Ale for farm workers, ale for sawing, ale for clearing the ponds and ale for fishing is recorded. Bitter beer was bought for the Hall at £4 19s. Five gallons of Whiskey was bought for £5 with carriage costs from Worksop of 2/-. Tenants' dinners and ale feature frequently in December.

We are keen to know more about the management of the local woodlands and the estate in general in the mid to late nineteenth century. We would be grateful for any local knowledge and we would also like to know if any photographs or drawings exist from this period?

Please can you help us?

Valerie Oxley 01709 813451 [valerie@mvoxley.co.uk](mailto:valerie@mvoxley.co.uk)

You may also contact Valerie if you would like to join the Friends of Firbeck Hall. The joining subscription is only £1.00 for which you will receive our regular newsletters with updates on progress at Firbeck Hall and on our historical research.



*John Horncastle,  
the Land Agent for Firbeck Hall*

## ELTON AND THE HAPPY CATS

Letwell's forthcoming music programme has a familiar look about it, but the return of long time favourites John Reilly and The Happy Cats is a highlight of the musical year at the village hall.

John's show on Saturday October 29th comes with a twist. For one night only the Boy On A Dolphin frontman will celebrate Elton John's career performing nothing but his music all night long. Supported by Canadian keyboards player Lewis Nitikman, John is relishing the challenge. "It's a great opportunity to perform some amazing music," says the Liverpudlian. "At the last count I knew 36 of Elton's finest songs...it's a matter of how many I can get through on the night."

The Happy Cats, due at the village hall on Saturday November 26th, need no introduction to Letwell regulars. The annual pre-Christmas knees up, hosted by former Lindisfarne star Marty Craggs with Scottish accordion champion Leonard Brown and Les Dodd on guitar, has been sell out as long as anyone can remember.

If you've never seen the Geordie band you're in for a real treat. Lashings of banter and good humour mixed together with a potent musical hotpot - a drop of Irish folk, a shot of Cajun, some country, a little bit of salsa and a twist of Tamla with a spot of Van Morrison thrown in for good measure.

It's never dull when the Happy Cats are in town!!

Tickets, priced £12, are available from Martyn and Andy on 01909 731626 or 540694. Don't wait too long - both shows are selling out fast.

## CAN YOU HELP?

Rotherham Biological Records Centre is part of a network of Local Environmental Records Centres that cover the UK. It holds almost 1.8 million individual records of plants and animals recorded within the Borough. These records have been collected largely voluntarily by individual amateur naturalists and recording groups, supplemented by data from commissioned surveys, environmental consultants and from trawling through historical documents.

This vast local resource is used by the Council to inform planning and management decisions; it is also used by students and contributes towards climate change research and national wildlife recording schemes as well as the National Biodiversity Network. The service is also free to use by members of the public, on application. The constantly expanding database very much depends on the support of individuals with an interest in wildlife to report what they see and where they see it, on a regular basis.

The Firbeck/Letwell area is a beautiful rural part of Rotherham from which we get little in the way of wildlife information these days – can you help? If you have an interest and are confident in the identification of plants and animals, why not get involved?

Just make a note of what you see, enter it onto a simple spreadsheet and email it to the Records Centre every month. Help from local experts is available to identify any interesting beasts that you're not sure of!

By doing this you will be improving your recording skills whilst helping to fill a hole in our knowledge about one of the most attractive parts of Rotherham and contributing to the work of one of the longest established and most respected Records Centres in the UK.

For further information on how you can be involved, contact Paul Leonard (Biological Records Officer) on 01709 822437 or by email on [rotherhambrc@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:rotherhambrc@rotherham.gov.uk)

## NEWS FROM FIRBECK-CUM-LETWELL WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Autumn is upon us (temperatures starting to plummet) – but we can still remember our successful Summer Afternoon Tea held in August. It was a gloriously sunny day and it was held at a beautiful house with stunning views. We were exceptionally lucky with the weather and everyone who attended had a wonderful time.

We celebrated our 70th Anniversary in July by having a party with burgers and beer tasting. It was a great night - with the added attraction of the fire alarm going off just as we were about to taste a 'smoked' beer!

Our Autumn programme has now started. It was WI Sports Week in September and we were put through our paces by fitness instructor Debbie, who showed us how to keep fit .... and of course, all our members are still doing the exercises!

At our October meeting, we will learn all about Support Dogs with Liz Kenyon. Also we are holding a Mosaic Workshop in Firbeck Village Hall on the 22nd October. (Some nice little Christmas presents coming up). And there will be no excuse to wear all the wrong colours this Autumn as Sue Burton will be giving us her expert Colour Analysis in November.

We will, of course, be having a Christmas Party in December. After the festivities we will settle down to do a bit of re-cycling of an old jumper (probably got lots of new ones for Christmas anyway) in January. So plenty of ideas to think about before then.

If you are interested in any of the above events, please contact the Secretary on 01909 540751.

## NATURE'S IN TROUBLE

There's good news and some bad from David Wright in the latest edition of his Nature Report....

For me, the highlight of the summer came in the form of two Lesser Whitethroats which appeared in my back garden on 1 August and stayed for several days, showing brilliantly; extremely unusual, as this summer visitor is rarely seen in the open, other than on migration. The birds usually confine themselves to thick cover, and their presence is only indicated by their harsh rattling song. It was a delight to see them feeding openly on insects and flitting from bush to bush. The Lesser Whitethroat is smaller than its cousin, the Whitethroat. It is also less colourful, and sports dark cheek feathers that contrast with its pale throat, giving it a masked look.

Meadow Pipits are now back on the airfield - probably having left their upland breeding areas, moving south for the winter. Unfortunately these small, streaky brown birds have been in decline in the UK since the 1970s and are now on the amber list of conservation concern.

On the subject of conservation concern, the RSPB has recently published its State of Nature Report 2016, which starkly demonstrates the trouble nature is in. The Biodiversity Intactness Index assesses the level of damage to nature across the world. Of 218 countries assessed, the UK is placed in a dismal 189th position, which is a real source of concern. The report is well worth a read: [https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/whatwedo/stateofnature2016?utm\\_source=homepage&utm\\_medium=website&utm\\_campaign=son2016&utm\\_source=OctEnews&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=OctEnews](https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/whatwedo/stateofnature2016?utm_source=homepage&utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=son2016&utm_source=OctEnews&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=OctEnews)

On a brighter note, it may be just that I've been in the right place at the right time, but I'm seeing more and more Bullhead in Lamb Lane Dyke. This small fish lives in cold, clear, fast-flowing streams. It's around 2.4 to 3.1 inches long (6 to 8 cm) and is light brown, mottled with darker colour.

Finally, a bird that delights people when it suddenly arrives in their gardens is the Green Woodpecker. The bird obviously knows where and when to find the ants it loves to eat.

David Wright 01709 813360 davidandgwenneth@gmail.com

## HOLIDAY QUAKE

Mick and Rita Harrison won't forget their Italian summer holiday in a hurry.

The couple landed in the path of the huge earthquake which reduced whole towns to rubble, and claimed 298 lives in late August.

Rita was woken at 3.30 in the morning by "an almighty bang."

"The whole hotel shuddered, and our suitcases suddenly started moving across the bedroom floor.

"Our room was on in the inside of the hotel so it wasn't hit as badly as those on the outside - the heavy wardrobes were actually skidding across the floor there."

The pair from Letwell had no idea what had happened till friends and colleagues started texting the next morning asking if they were okay.

Rita added: "We turned on the TV, and then we saw what the earthquake had done. It was really shocking.

"We kept feeling the tremors for several days. There were more earthquakes happening all the time."

Rita witnessed the force of one big tremor on the terrace of the couple's hotel in Perugia - which was situated some 23 miles from the epicentre of the first quake.

"It was the day after the big one, and I was taking part in an Italian cookery course on the terrace. Suddenly the whole place shuddered, and all the tables and drinks were just moving across the floor."

The couple were happy to be home. Rita said: "The earthquakes did makes us more hesitant about venturing out..."

## ANOTHER CRASH...AND BENNY HILL'S GONE

Speeding cars continue to misjudge the bend at the junction of Lamb Lane and Penny Hill. FLAG's roaming photographer came upon the latest casualty just the other day. The man driving the recovery truck had a few things to say about the recurring problem: "I seem to be here all the time. Wouldn't happen if people just slowed down a little bit...."

While at the scene we noticed the Penny Hill sign had gone missing. The roadside plaque - which some joker changed years ago so it read Benny Hill - may well have been claimed by souvenir hunters. But FLAG hears that Rotherham council aren't going to replace the sign quickly unless lots of people complain. Phone Streetpride on 01709 382121 to spur them on....



*Another Crash*